



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XVIII, ISSUE 4

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

April 2003

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



By E. Veronica Pace

Again we find ourselves coping with alerts and warnings as our country and senior citizens monitor developments in Iraq. Mayor Anthony A. Williams has told us through the media that we should be prepared for any emergency that may occur, but continue our lives as usual. In keeping with this recommendation, we are providing you with information to help you prepare.

Also in this issue of Spotlight on Aging we are focusing on Healthy Aging. We are taking a closer look at BODYWISE — our first comprehensive fitness program for seniors in the District. If you enjoy music, BODYWISE will present a benefit concert on April 6 at UDC.

This month, we observe National Alcohol Screening Day on April 10. Seniors should control their alcohol intake because of the serious interactions that are possible with prescription and over-the-counter drugs.

Seniors in the District should also be mindful of the high incidence rate of cancer among members of the African American community. During Minority Cancer Awareness Week, adopt a healthier lifestyle — it just might save your life.

Diet and exercise and leading healthier lifestyles are important for everyone, including senior citizens. It's never too late to begin living well!

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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441 4th St., N.W., 9th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-724-5622
www.dcoa.dc.gov

E. Veronica Pace, **Executive Director**
Darlene Nowlin, **Editor**
Adrian R. Reed, **Photographer**

National Minority Cancer Awareness Week is April 20-26

According to the American Cancer Society, African Americans are more likely to develop and die from cancer than persons of any other racial or ethnic group.

From 1992 to 1999 the annual incidence for all types of cancer was 526.6 per 100,000 persons among African Americans, 480.4 among Caucasians, 348.6 among Asians/Pacific Islanders, 329.6 among Hispanics, and 244.6 among American Indians/Alaska natives. The death rate for all cancers combined is 30 percent higher in African Americans than in Caucasians.

Seven Steps to Take to Prevent Cancer

Doctors say that if we all adopt these seven simple choices, we could prevent up to 60 percent of cancer deaths. Here they are:

CUT OUT TOBACCO. Smoking is the No. 1 cause of preventable cancer deaths. Each year, approximately 430,000 lives are lost due to tobacco use, more than 165,000 of them due to cancer.

Every day, 3,000 children start smoking. By cutting out tobacco and avoiding second-hand smoke, you can immediately reduce your risk for cancer of the lung, throat, bladder, kidney, pancreas and mouth.

HOLD THE FAT. Studies show a low-fat diet reduces your risk for cancer of the colon, breast and prostate. We recommend you reduce your dietary fat to 30 percent or less of calories consumed. Not only will you reduce your cancer risk, you'll also look and feel better.

LIMIT ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION. There is mounting evidence that heavy alcohol use can increase your risk for cancer of the mouth, larynx and esophagus. Heavy alcohol consumption is also linked to breast cancer in women.

While there is evidence of some health

benefit to one glass of wine daily, the American Cancer Society recommends you drink alcohol only occasionally, and sparingly. By the way, your cancer risk from alcohol use is much greater if you smoke or chew tobacco.

EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES. A recent study found that people who eat many fruits and vegetables every day have a lower cancer risk than those who eat just one serving or none at all.

CALL YOUR DOCTOR. Many cancers begin their deadly growth long before symptoms become obvious. Cancer must be found early, when you have the best chance for a cure. So, be aware of any physical changes, conduct regular self-exams, and visit your doctor regularly for cancer screening.

EXERCISE REGULARLY. A strong, fit body has a better chance of warding off many forms of cancer. Obesity has been linked to cancer of the breast, ovaries, cervix, colon and prostate.

So, make activity a regular part of your life. Take the stairs, go for a jog, work in your garden. Park your car and walk. It doesn't matter what you do, just do it. And do it every day.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE SUN. The last choice is one of the easiest. About 90 percent of the skin cancers diagnosed each year could be prevented by proper use of sun protection. Some skin cancers, such as malignant melanoma, can be fatal.

Use sunscreen rated at SPF 15 or higher. Avoid exposure during peak hours, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Examine your skin regularly and consult your doctor about anything unusual — particularly a change in the size or color of a mole.

And remember that children face a lifetime of exposure to the sun. Don't forget to protect them as well.



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Community Calendar

April events

Senior Recruitment. The Greater Washington Urban League is recruiting seniors to visit and participate in its activities at nutrition centers in Wards 2 and 5. Services provided include: case management, recreation and socialization, health promotion, nutrition, education and nutrition counseling. For more information, contact Brenda L. Turner, director of Aging Services, or Evelyn Minor, nutrition health services coordinator, at 202-529-8701.

7th • 11 a.m.

Model Cities Senior Wellness Center is sponsoring a free lecture on substance abuse featuring Cassandra Hardison of the D.C. Department of Health. Model Cities is located at 1901 Evarts Street, N.E. For more information, call 202-635-1900.

7th

Take a trip with the Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service art class to the Library of Congress to see the show, "Creative Space, 50 Years of Printmaking." Trip is free and transportation will be provided. The class art instructor will be present to provide information about the printmaking process. Call 202-678-2800 for further details. Bus will leave from the center at 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E.

8th • noon to 2 p.m.

The D.C. Caregivers Institute presents personal care tips at a caregivers seminar. A nurse will give tips on providing personal care to seniors, such as techniques for lifting and bathing others without hurting yourself. The lecture will be held at the Institute of Gerontology, University of the District of Columbia, 4340 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Nursing Lab Room B21. Accessible by Metro on the Red Line, UDC/Van Ness Metro Stop. To register, call 202-464-1513.

9th • 1 p.m.

Learn steps to take to prevent cancer, in addition to early detection of cancer. Don't miss this important workshop at the Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service center, 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E. For details, call 202-678-2800.

10th • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Free mammogram screenings will be given at the Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service center, 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E. The George Washington University's Mammovan will be performing free mammogram screening for women who show proof of accepted insurance. Women who don't qualify may pay for screening out of pocket. To see if you qualify for a free screening and to register, call 202-678-2800.

11th • 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Spring fellowship and fish fry at Randall Memorial Nutrition Center, 1002 46th St., N.E. This is a free

event hosted by Project Keen. RSVP by calling 202-388-4280.

11th • 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

EOFULA (Educational Organization for United Latin Americans) Spanish Senior Center will be taking a trip to the National Gallery of Art. They will be leaving from the center at 1844 Columbia Rd., N.W. If you would like further information, contact Alberto at 202-483-5800.

15th • 1:30 p.m.

Columbia Senior Center will be hosting an Easter concert at the center, 1250 Taylor St., N.W. Enjoy the uplifting music of the season. For details, call Monica at 202-328-3270.

16th • 1 p.m.

Give your mind a workout! Join Nancy Dezan of the Alzheimer's Association for "Brain Aerobics" at Model Cities Senior Wellness Center, 1901 Evarts Street, N.E. To learn more, call 202-635-1900.

17th

Take a trip with Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service center to Tyson's Corner for a day of shopping and lunch at the Rainforest Cafe. Call for menu choices, trip cost and any other additional questions you may have: 202-678-2800.

18th • 1 p.m.

Eileen Dombro, from the D.C. Rape Crisis Center, will give a presentation on sexual assault on the elderly. This presentation will be held at Model Cities Senior Wellness Center, 1901 Evarts St., N.E. To get more details on this event, call 202-635-1900.

18th • 7:30 p.m.

Columbia Senior Center will be attending the Evangel Cathedral Easter Production on Friday, April 18th at 7:30 p.m. There is a donation of \$25 to attend the event. For details, call Monica Carroll at 202-328-3270, ext. 11.

19th

Seniors from Columbia Senior Center will take a trip to the Kennedy Center for a matinee performance of the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. Contact Monica Carroll at 202-328-3270, ext. 11 to learn more.

21st

The Annual Dwelling Place Senior Center Inter-generational Easter Monday Celebration will be held at the Bailey's Room at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church at 2800 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E. There will be an Easter egg hunt, talent show, and crafts for seniors and grandchildren. To participate in the talent show, contact Edwinta Jenkins 202-582-7138.

21st • 1 p.m.

Join Toni Boyer of the American Red Cross for a free lecture on disaster preparedness at Model

Cities Senior Wellness Center, 1901 Evarts Street, N.E. For more information, call 202-635-1900.

22nd • 9 a.m.

Join Model Cities Senior Wellness Center for a trip to Midway Casino in Harrington, Del. The donation is \$10. For details, contact Tisha Tucker at 202-635-1900.

23rd • 9 a.m.

Project Keen is hosting a field trip to the Smithsonian. There you will view several exhibits, including "Nature's Jewels, A Living Exhibit of Orchids and Butterflies," and a visit to the Columbia space shuttle memorial. Bus leaves promptly from the Kenilworth Parkside Recreation Center. Lunch is on your own. Call Project Keen at 202-388-4280 to reserve your seat.

24th • 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The "Never Too Old To Learn" literacy program of Project Keen will present a special program showcasing talents and accomplishments of participants in the program. The presentation will be held at the Hughes Memorial United Methodist Church, 53rd and Ames St., N.E. Lunch will be served. You must reserve your seat by calling Project Keen at 202-388-4280.

25th • 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Go on a spring picnic at the U.S. National Arboretum with EOFULA Spanish Senior Center. The trip will leave from the center, 1844 Columbia Rd., N.W. For details, call Alberto, 202-483-5800.

28th • 8:45 a.m.

Dwelling Place Senior Center & New World Tours presents Midway Casino! Cost is \$15. Bus departs from 2812 Pennsylvania Ave, S.E. To purchase your ticket in advance, contact Edwinta Jenkins, 202-582-7138.

Early May events

8th • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging and the Senior Service Network present the Older Americans Month Caregiver Information Fair in the Lobby of One Judiciary Square, 441 Fourth Street, N.W. For more information, call 202-724-5626.

May 17

Join the staffs of Columbia Senior Center and Family and Child Services' Senior Social Services department in supporting a worthy cause — the 2nd Annual 5K Walk for Children. The walk benefits Family and Child Services' children-at-risk programs, including adoptions, foster care, counseling and childcare. For walk applications, contact Nancy Piness, team captain and center director at Columbia Senior Center at 202-328-3270. Donations to support the walkers' efforts are also welcome.

National Alcohol Screening Day is Thursday, April 10

The Department of Health's Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration is coordinating National Alcohol Screening Day in the District.

The purpose of Alcohol Screening Day is to make more people aware of the problems associated with alcohol abuse, and to provide screening, education and literature. The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse reports that over 5 million persons 55 or older were "binge" drinkers, and more than 1 million were heavy alcohol users.

According to the National Institute on Aging, alcohol slows down brain activity. Alcohol affects alertness, judgment,

coordination and reaction time, and increases the risk of falls and accidents.

Over time, heavy drinking can permanently damage the brain and central nervous system, as well as the liver, heart, kidneys and stomach.

Research shows that it takes less alcohol to affect older people than younger ones. As people age, the body's ability to absorb and dispose of alcohol and other drugs changes.

Anyone who drinks should check with their doctor or pharmacist to find out more about alcohol and prescription drug interactions.

To find out more about alcohol abuse, attend National Alcohol Screening Day at one of the following locations, or call (202) 442-9171.

Screening Locations:

Delta Towers 1400 Florida Avenue, N.E.

Garfield Apartments 2301 11th Street, N.W.

Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service
2451 Good Hope Road, S.E.

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

When Emergencies Occur

An emergency can occur quickly and without warning. The most important thing you can do to keep yourself and your family safe in an emergency is to prepare, stay calm and follow instructions from emergency personnel.

The following information was prepared by the D.C. Emergency Management Agency to help residents prepare for emergencies. A "Complete Family Preparedness Guide" is available at www.dcema.dc.gov/info/guide.shtm.

Create an Emergency Plan

Before creating your household emergency plan, learn about the types of emergencies that may affect your community, how you will be notified of an event, and plans that may already be in place to deal with these events.

Learn if your community has a warning system — via television, radio, or another signal. Recognize what the warning sounds like and learn what to do when you hear it.

Emergencies may strike when your family members are away from home, so find out about plans at your workplace, school, or anywhere else you and your family spends time.

Steps to take in creating a household emergency plan include:

- Meet with household members and discuss the dangers of possible emergency events, including fire, severe weather, hazardous spills and terrorism.
- Discuss how you and your family will respond to each possible emergency.
- Discuss what to do in case of power outages or personal injuries.
- Draw a floor plan of your home. Mark two escape routes from each room.
- Teach adults how to turn off the water, gas and electricity at main switches.
- Post emergency contact numbers near all telephones; pre-program emergency numbers into phones with autodial capabilities.
- Teach children how and when to dial 9-1-1 to get emergency assistance.
- Teach children how to make long-distance telephone calls.
- Pick a friend or relative that all family members will call if separated (it is often easier to call out-of-state during an emergency than within the affected area).
- Instruct household members to turn on the radio and tune to WTOP 1500 AM for emergency information.
- Pick two meeting places: A place near your home, and a place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after an emergency.
- Take a Basic First Aid and CPR class. Contact American Red Cross for more info.
- Keep family records in a water and fireproof safe. Inexpensive models can be purchased at most hardware stores.

Prepare an Emergency Go Kit

Often during an emergency, electricity, water, heat, air conditioning and telephone service may not work. Preparing an Emergency Go Kit ahead of time can save precious time in the event you must evacuate or go without electricity, heat, or water for an extended period of time.

You should consider including the following items in an Emergency Go Kit:

- At least a three-day supply of water (1 gallon per person per day). Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Replace every 6 months.
- A three- to five-day supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener.
- A change of clothing, rain gear and sturdy shoes.
- Blankets, bedding or sleeping bags.
- A first aid kit and prescription medications (be sure to check the expiration dates).

- An extra pair of glasses or contact lenses and solution (be sure to check the expiration date).
- A list of family physicians, important medical information, and the style and serial number of medical devices such as pacemakers.
- Special items for infants, the elderly, or family members with disabilities.
- A battery-powered radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries.
- Identification, credit cards, cash and photocopies of important family documents, including home insurance information.
- An extra set of car and house keys.
- Tools such as screwdrivers, cutters and scissors; duct tape; waterproof matches; a fire extinguisher; flares; plastic storage containers; needle and thread; pen and paper; a compass; garbage bags; and regular household bleach.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Working with neighbors in an emergency can save lives and property. Meet with your community members to plan how you could work together until help arrives.

If you're a member of a neighborhood organization, such as a home association or crime watch group, introduce emergency preparedness as a new activity. Know your neighbor's special skills and consider how you could help those with special needs, such as people with disabilities and elderly persons.

If You Have Pets

Create a survival kit for your pet. This should include:

- Identification collar and rabies tag.
- Carrier or cage.
- Leash.
- Any medications (be sure to check expiration dates).
- Newspapers and plastic trash bags for handling waste.
- At least a two-week supply of food, water, and food bowls.
- Veterinary records (most animal shelters do not allow pets without proof of vaccination).
- If you have no other choice but to leave your pet at home, place your pet in a safe area inside your home with plenty of water and food. Never leave pets chained outside.
- Place a note outside your home listing what pets are inside, where they are located, and phone numbers of where you can be reached.

After An Emergency Strikes

During and after an emergency, it is important to stay calm. Even after an event, there may still be many dangers. What seems like a safe distance or location may not be.

Stay tuned to your local emergency station and follow the advice of trained professionals. Unless told to evacuate, avoid roads to allow emergency vehicles access. What you do next can save your life and the lives of others.

Here are some helpful hints:

If Your Power Goes Out

- Remain calm, and assist family members or neighbors who may be vulnerable if exposed to extreme heat or cold.
- Locate a flashlight with batteries to use until power comes back on. Do not use candles — this can cause a fire.
- Turn off sensitive electric equipment such as computers, VCRs, and televisions.
- Turn off major electric appliances that were on when the power went off. This will help to prevent power surges when electricity is restored.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep cold in and heat out.
- Do not use the stove to heat your home — this can cause a fire or fatal gas leak.

- Use extreme caution when driving. If traffic signals are out, treat each signal as a stop sign — come to a complete stop at every intersection and look before you proceed.
- Do not call 9-1-1 to ask about the power outage. Listen to the news radio stations for updates.

Technological Hazards Emergencies

If you are notified or become aware of a technological hazards emergency — such as a hazardous spill/release, fire, or explosion — do not panic. If you need to get out of the surrounding area or are directed to evacuate, do so immediately and:

- Take your Emergency Go Kit.
- Lock your home.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a wet cloth.
- Travel on routes specified by local authorities.
- Head up-wind of the incident.

If you are sure you have time:

- Shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving.
- Post a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Make arrangements for your pets.

If you are instructed to stay inside and not to evacuate:

- Close and lock windows and doors.
- Seal gaps under doorways and windows with wet towels and duct tape.
- Turn off ventilation systems, water and gas.

Important District Telephone Numbers

Police, Fire & EMS

EMERGENCIES: 9-1-1

NON-EMERGENCIES: 3-1-1

3-1-1 is a toll-free phone number to request police services in non-emergency situations. These are situations that are not serious, not life threatening, or not currently in progress.

Additional information on emergency preparedness is available by calling:

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)

.....800-480-2520

DC EMA202-673-2101, ext. 1163

Or on the Internet at:

<http://www.fema.gov>

<http://www.redcross.org>

<http://dcema.dc.gov>

The Mayor's City-wide Call Center202-727-1000

DC Emergency Management Agency

(24-hour line)202-727-6161

(For the hearing impaired)202-727-3323

Department of Mental Health800-793-4357

(Access Help Line)202-561-7000

American Red Cross, National Capital Chapter

.....202-728-6401

Verizon (phone)800-275-2355

PEPCO (electric):

—Customer service202-833-7500

—Power outages800-PEPCO-62

—Downed wires202-872-3432

Poison Control Center800-222-1222

Washington Gas:

—Customer Service202-624-6049

—Natural Gas Emergency Number800-750-1400

DC Water and Sewer Authority202-787-2000

—Water and Sewer Emergency Number202-612-3400

DC Health Department202-442-5999

Pets and Animal Issues202-535-2323

DC Animal Shelter (24-hours)202-576-6664

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Join BODYWISE and Get Fit

BODYWISE is a fitness and health promotion program for D.C. residents 60 years of age and older. It is sponsored by the University of the District of Columbia and administered by the Institute of Gerontology of UDC in collaboration with D.C. Parks and Recreation and IONA Senior Services. **BODYWISE** is funded by the D.C. Department of Health, Preventive Health Services Administration, D.C. Office on Aging, D.C. Parks and Recreation and IONA Senior Services.

Purpose

BODYWISE is specially designed and operated to promote health, wellness and fitness for D.C. residents 60 and over. Some of the benefits that may be achieved include an increase in cardiovascular efficiency, muscular strength, flexibility and overall life satisfaction.

Description

The **BODYWISE** program consists of water exercise (swimming is not required), stretching, walking, and movement and chair exercise classes, as well as fitness and health promotion programs.

Each of these activities includes a health education component covering topics such as the safe use of over-the-counter medications, blood pressure screening, and the benefits of exercise for some physical problems. The program offers other opportunities for learning and socializing.

Classes are conducted by appropriately trained and certified instructors. Participants are encouraged to exercise at their personal level of fitness.

Eligibility requirements

Participants in the **BODYWISE** program must:

- Be a resident of the District of Columbia
- Be 60 years of age or older
- Complete an application form
- Obtain a medical release form executed and signed by his/her physician annually.

Location and Schedule

BODYWISE activities are offered at sites convenient to residents throughout the District of Columbia. Locations and times of regular exercise classes include the following:

University of the District of Columbia

Van Ness Campus, 4200 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.,
Gymnasium, Building 47

Water Exercise, 8 to 8:45 a.m.
Tues., Thurs., & Fri.

Water Exercise, 9 to 9:45 a.m.
Tues., Thurs., & Fri.

Water Exercise, 10 to 10:45 a.m.
Tues., Thurs. & Fri.

Stretch and Walk, 9 to 9:45 a.m.
Tues., Thurs., & Fri.

D.C. Therapeutic Center

3030 G Street, S.E.

Water Exercise, 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.
Mon., Wed.

Water Exercise, 10:15 to 11 a.m.
Mon., Wed.

The Allen House

3760 Minnesota Avenue, N.E.

Movement & Chair Exercise,
1:30 to 2:45 p.m. - Wed., Fri.

Thurgood Marshall Extended School

31st Street & Fort Lincoln Drive, N.E.

Swimming Lessons, 10 to 10:45 a.m. - Tues., Thurs.

Water Exercise, 11 to 11:45 a.m. - Tues., Thurs.

Michaux Senior Center

Mayfair Manor, 3700 Hayes Street, N.E.

Movement & Chair Exercise, 11 to 11:45 a.m.
Tues., Thurs.

First Baptist Church Senior Center

715 Randolph Street, N.W.

Stretch and Walk, 11 to 11:45 a.m. - Tues., Thurs.

Phillip T. Johnson Senior Center

First United Methodist Church, 4323 Bowen Road, S.E.

Movement & Chair Exercise, 1 to 1:45 p.m.
Tues., Thurs.

Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service

2451 Good Hope Road, S.E.

Water Exercise (*therapeutic pool*), 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.
Mon., Wed.

Southern Baptist Church, 132 L Street, N.W.

Movement & Chair Exercise, Noon to 1:45 p.m. - Wed.

Enrollment procedures

Application for participation in **BODYWISE** programs must be made in advance.

To obtain a **BODYWISE** application form or for additional information on the program, contact:
University of the District of Columbia,
Institute of Gerontology
4340 Connecticut Ave., N.W.,
Second Floor
Washington, DC 20008
202-274-6697

